

Building on a strong base

The turn of any new year, let alone a new millennium, provides an opportunity to reflect on the past year and to look forward with anticipation to the next. As far as the compound semiconductor industry is concerned, we have every reason to look back at 1999 with satisfaction in its successes, and to look forward to the new century confident that we have a sound base to build on.

By all accounts, the past year has been an excellent one for GaAs IC suppliers, with many companies enjoying strong results. For example, the latest quarterly figures available from Alpha Industries, Anadigics and TriQuint Semiconductor show revenues up 41%, 61% and 46%, respectively, compared to the same period a year earlier. And RF Micro Devices saw third quarter revenues more than double. Overall, GaAs IC sales for 1999 are estimated at US\$2 billion (see pp. 35-39), and Strategies Unlimited forecasts this figure to grow by more than 20% annually to reach \$4 billion in 2003. While mobile telephones will remain the largest application area for GaAs ICs over the next five years, automotive applications (see pp. 14-17) together with the satellite market segment should see the fastest growth.

1999 has also seen the establishment of the 6" age for GaAs wafers, with companies such as Infineon, Anadigics and Motorola, among others, following Vitesse's early lead, as chronicled in these pages. Most GaAs IC manufacturers have now announced their intention to follow suit by early 2001.

Away from mainstream GaAs, the wide bandgap materials are performing well. The market for SiC and GaN

based high-brightness LEDs alone is predicted to reach \$1 billion over the next five years. Cree Inc is already reporting that 71% of its LED sales are for the high-brightness products (p. 5). Not to be outshone, an InP HBT from TRW last month claimed the top spot as the world's fastest digital IC (p.12). So the whole industry has much to be proud of as we enter the year 2000.

This millennium period is also a time for change at *III-Vs Review* itself. This is my last issue as editor of the magazine. After almost two and half years with *III-Vs Review*, and nearly seven with Elsevier, I intend to seek new pastures in my homeland of Australia. By the time you receive the next issue a new editor will be in place. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all every success as you tackle the exciting challenges ahead for the compound semiconductor industry in the new century. Happy New Year!



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III-Vs Review — Covering advanced semiconductors worldwide
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Published six times a year

Elsevier Advanced Technology, The Boulevard, Langford Lane, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1AS, UK.

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Subscriptions: Annual subscription (six issues) NLG453/US\$230/£147/€205.56. Price valid to end of 2000 and includes airmail delivery in Europe and airspeeded delivery elsewhere.

Ⓜ A member of the Reed Elsevier plc group

Periodicals postage paid at Rahway, NJ. *III-Vs Review* is published six times a year. Postmaster send all address corrections to *III-Vs Review*, c/o Elsevier Science Regional Sales Office, Customer Support Department, 655 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10010.

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Printed by: Friary Press Ltd. Journal Number: 02076 ISSN 0961-1290

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